



District of Columbia Sentencing Commission

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MINUTES OF FULL COMMISSION MEETING

March 19, 2019

One Judiciary Square, Suite 430S, Washington, DC 20001

Voting Members in Attendance:

Milton Lee	Julie Samuels
Renata K. Cooper	Molly Gill
Katerina Semyonova	Dave Rosenthal
Danya Dyson	Frederick Weisberg
Marvin Turner	Cedric Hendricks (via phone)

Non-Voting Members in Attendance:

Kevin Whitfield
Diane Strote for Judi Garrett

Staff in Attendance:

Barbara Tombs-Souvey	Kara Dansky	Taylor Tarnalicki
Mia Hebb	Mehmet Ergun	Miatta Sesay

- I. Judge Weisberg called the meeting to order at 5:36 p.m. for Chairman Lee.
- II. The minutes from February 19, 2019, were briefly discussed. The minutes were approved pending any changes submitted to Barbara Tombs-Souvey.
- III. Annual Report Overview – Informational Item, Barbara Tombs-Souvey.

Annual Report Overview: Ms. Tombs-Souvey thanked Commission members for their review of the Annual Report and the edits/suggestions provided. Ms. Tombs-Souvey then gave an overview of the 2018 Annual Report's key findings and sentencing trends, which included:

- Slight decrease in number of counts, cases, and offenders sentenced compared to 2017
- Decrease in violent and drug sentences but increase in weapon and homicide sentences
- Individuals age 18 to 30 represented 57% of all individuals sentenced
- 67% of sentences involved some period of incarceration
- Violent and weapon offenses accounted for 53% of all sentences imposed
- CPWL, UPF-PF, and PFDCV accounted for 92% of all weapon offenses sentenced
- The most frequent homicide offenses sentenced included Murder I and Murder II
- Judicial compliance with the Guidelines was 97.6%; highest percentage to date
- Lowest rate of compliance was observed in weapon and drug offenses
- Sex offenses had the highest rate of compliance

The Annual Report overview also included a comparison of felony sentencing trends and compliance from 2010 to 2018. Commission members discussed the findings presented and provided feedback.

IV. Presentation of Requested Research Findings – Discussion Item, Mehmet Ergun, Statistician.

Presentation of Requested Research Findings: Mr. Ergun presented an overview of data findings addressing the Commission’s research questions on the impact of prior lapsed/revived convictions and juvenile adjudications on defendants’ Criminal History scores.

The key findings from the research presented in the memo distributed to Commission members indicated that overall, 18% of felony cases sentenced between 2015 and 2018 had one or more prior lapsed and revived convictions included in criminal history (CH) scores. Lapse and revived convictions were most prominent in CH scores for individuals sentenced for drug offenses. In 54% of the CH scores where a lapsed and revived offense occurred, an individual moved to a higher CH category and in 9% the individual was moved to a recommended prison-only box.

The impact of the inclusion of juvenile adjudications in criminal history scores was also presented by Mr. Ergun. The data indicated that 13% of individuals sentenced had a prior juvenile adjudication in their CH score; for violent offenses sentenced that percentage increased to 49%. The inclusion of a juvenile adjudication resulted in a higher criminal history category in 65% of cases sentenced and resulted in a prison-only recommended sentence in 7% of the cases.

A brief discussion among Commission members followed the presentation.

V. Presentation of Crime Curve Analysis – Informational Item, Taylor Tarnalicki, Research Analyst.

Presentation of Crime Curve Analysis: Ms. Tarnalicki gave an overview of the literature related to the age-crime curve and several developmental theories that either support or challenge the age-crime curve theory presented in the memorandum to Commission members.

Ms. Tarnalicki discussed the relationship between age and crime in D.C., and compared these findings to the relationship presented in the literature. Overall, the trends observed in D.C. are similar to the age-crime curve, though with a few discrepancies, specifically when examining Drug crime. However, it was noted that the findings presented were not the result of a longitudinal study or analysis, thus the findings have significant limitations. The presentation was followed by a discussion among Commission members. Commission members requested additional age-crime analysis for specific offenses and a list of offenses included in the violent offense category to be discussed at the next meeting.

Meeting Adjourned at 6:40pm.

NEXT MEETING:

April 23, 2019
One Judiciary Square (441 4th Street, NW) Suite 430S.